

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, Congressmen Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and Adam Putnam (R-Fla.) introduced legislation to modernize America's food safety network. Continued incidences of food-borne illness have called for Congressional action to maintain the safety and security of America's food supply. To address these vulnerabilities in the nation's ability to adequately safeguard the food supply, Costa and Putnam have introduced The Safe Food Enforcement, Assessment, Standards and Targeting Act, "Safe FEAST Act," which would establish new food safety requirements for domestically produced and imported food to identify and prevent potential sources of food-borne illness. For the first time, the measure grants the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) statutory power to recall contaminated food in the case of adulteration.

"Although American food still continues to be among the safest in the world, it is not surprising that recent food safety problems have caused Americans to lose confidence in our nation's ability to keep our food safe," said Costa. "We lack a system which ensures the best management practices and facilitates a strong relationship between federal and state agencies to better prevent and control food safety threats at all levels of food production. Quite simply, this legislation will help make the American consumer's food supply even safer by preventing these problems before they occur."

"This is the kind of meaningful legislation that comes from people and groups working together in the common good," said Putnam. "Our bill gives powerful new tools to the FDA and it establishes scientific-based standards for all food producers along the food chain to adhere to modern risk analysis and prevention practices. It's a win-win-win approach that will mean American consumers can have an even higher level of confidence than ever before in the safety and quality of the food they eat."

To ensure that food products coming into the United States from international sources are safe, imported goods would have to adhere to the same safety and quality standards as set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Foreign Suppliers Quality Assurance Program would verify that all imported goods meet FDA safety requirements and requires food importers to complete a foreign supplier food safety plan, documenting the food safety measures and controls for FDA review.

The bill includes a Mandatory Food Risk Assessment and Preventative Controls Plan that requires all domestic and foreign food companies selling food in U.S. to conduct a food safety risk analysis that identifies potential sources of contamination, outlines appropriate food safety

controls, and requires verification that the food safety controls implemented are adequate to address the risks of food-borne contamination.

It establishes new standards for fruits and vegetables, including updating Good Agricultural Practices Guidance for safe production and issuance of regulation on safety standards, when risk and science demonstrate standards are needed. Increases coordination between, federal, state and foreign governments to ensure that standards and allows for variances to meet local growing conditions.

Finally, the Safe FEAST Act would grant FDA authority to access food safety production records during emergencies and deny importation of goods if strict food safety standards are not met and directs the agency to adopt a risk-based approach to inspections, giving greater scrutiny to facilities posing greater risk.